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Civil Rights Department Disturbed By CMU Nooses And Recent Spike In Symbols Of Hate

Lansing, MI – Michigan Department of Civil Rights Director Linda V. Parker today released the following statement in light of news of four nooses being hung on the campus of Central Michigan University. The nooses appear to be part of an alarming trend in the occurrence of hate symbols in Michigan.

“I was most disturbed to hear that four nooses were hung in a college classroom right here in Michigan. The nooses, which were reported to police Monday but announced yesterday, face Michigan with an undeniably clear symbol of racial intolerance to the absolute extreme. Throughout far too much of American history nooses have symbolized the threat of death, primarily to Blacks but also to any others who dare to be different.

While we trust that local law enforcement and the university have begun the relevant investigations, we urge the public to speak out against even the perception of hate. The perception of hate, especially when it is expressed through powerful symbols such as nooses, can cause very real tensions and fear in those who see themselves as potential targets of bias activity. It is critical that all Michigan, and the university community in particular, stand together as one in denouncing all such hateful symbols.

We will stand firm against any expression of hate, and in defense of the safety of and respect for all of the people of Michigan. As CMU continues to investigate and bring comfort and a sense of security to its students following this atrocious act, I extend the services of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, and the various partners that make up the Michigan Alliance Against Hate Crime.”

For more information on the Department of Civil Rights visit the website at <http://www.michigan.gov/mdcr>.

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